DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 420 298 IR 018 917

AUTHOR Hewitt, William J.
TITLE 8 Easy Ways To Develop Your Web Page.
PUB DATE 1998-00-00
NOTE 10p.
PUB TYPE Guides - Non-Classroom (055)
EDRS PRICE EDRS Price MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Computer Assisted Instruction; Computer System Design; *Computer Uses in Education; *Design Preferences; Elementary Secondary Education; Material Development; Screen Design (Computers); *World Wide Web
IDENTIFIERS Home Pages; *Web Sites

ABSTRACT

This paper presents ideas to help educators develop a Web page geared to supplement classroom instruction. These suggestions include: (1) keep it simple, initially; (2) organize; (3) use tables; (4) apply color; (5) provide images; (6) consult others; (7) get class feedback; (8)consider a discussion forum; and (9) link to other sites that relate to the class material. (AEF)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

IR

Running head: 8 EASY WAYS TO DEVELOP

ED 420 298

8 Easy Ways to Develop Your Web Page

William J. Hewitt

Assistant Professor of Economics, Carson-Newman College

IR018917

© 1998, William J. Hewitt, PhD

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE AND IN ELECTRONIC MEDIA FOR ERIC COLLECTION SUBSCRIBERS ONLY, HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

William J. Hewitt

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

8 Easy Ways to Develop Your Web Page

By William J. Hewitt

You have probably seen everything about using new technology to facilitate classroom instruction. You're excited about entering into the 1990's technology of media based education. So, how do you do it? I have listed some ideas that will help you develop a web page geared to supplement classroom instruction. I have personally used many of these ideas in the development of my own web page for an introductory economics course.

Keep it Simple- Initially

The first thing you need to ask yourself is, "What is the purpose of this web page?" The web pages I discuss are designed to supplement classroom instruction. These pages perform a more functional than entertaining role. For me, a classroom web page examines and extends the material discussed in class. You need a personal web page if you would rather talk about your family background, show pictures of your pets or just express your opinions on a variety of subjects.

Initially, I keep the web page as simple as possible. This helps me in two ways - the ease of fixing problems and ease of download. When you are new at web page development a simple page is easier to diagnose and fix than a more complicated one.

Simplicity achieves a faster downloading time. Although the latest and fastest computer may be at your disposal, it is probably not at many of your students' disposal. A large number of students still do not have computers at home and use the college's or university's facilities for viewing and printing out information on your page. By keeping your page simple and graphics to a minimum, you allow faster access time to your page regardless of the students' location.

Organize

Another issue to consider is web page organization. I recommend that you develop a basic chart or outline showing how different pages of your subject are linked together. Start from your initial welcome page (called a home page) and then branch out into different subject areas you want included online. (Figure 1).

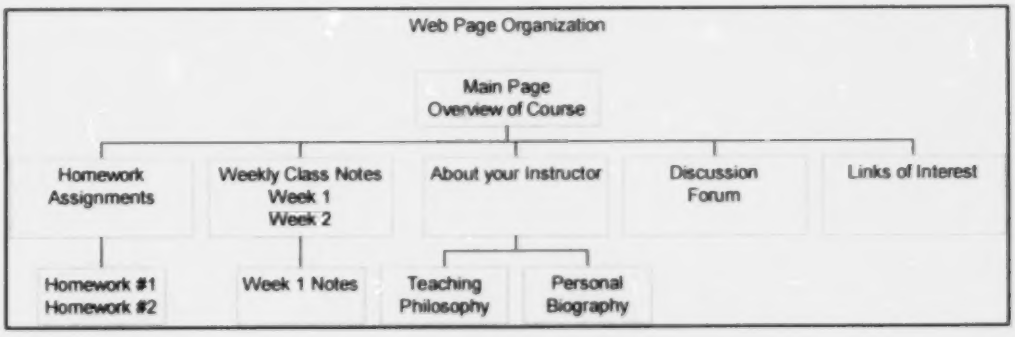

Figure 1. ECN 2010 Web Page Organization

The keep it simple principle also works for organization. Each graphic and or effect is a file. The more files you have the greater chance for your confusion.

Use Tables

Tables provide a great way to organize and present information on your web page. Use tables to present data, ideas, a list of subjects or combined with different types of graphics. You might embed links in tables (a link is a locational reference to another area on your web page or on the world wide web). Embedding links allow your viewers to have quick access to either other areas of the website or to points of class interest on the World Wide Web.

Apply Color

Color and images enhance your web page. Color can make a dull looking web page spring to life. Experiment with and use color in many different ways. Change not only the background, but also the text, links, and borders. Combine colors with tables to get a dynamic effect.

Provide Images

Images can also enhance the web page. Make sure that the images relate to the function of the page and are not just for aesthetics. Be aware that images take time to download and many students may not have the facilities necessary to view and print

them. Always state in text what the images are supposed to confer.

Images can take a while to download off of the World Wide Web. Another way to have images in your web page and still have a fast download time is to use thumbnail images. Thumbnail images are very small copies of bigger images that are linked to those bigger images. Thumbnails are best used if you have many images or very large images in a page or the images are not vital to understanding the text in your web page. The reference guides at the end of this article tell you how to make a thumbnail.

Consult Others

When developing your web page, examine other web pages for ideas. As you look at these pages consult with the designer. Ask questions about the complexity of design and what difficulties were encountered in developing the web page. Most people are proud of their pages and gladly offer you advice.

When developing your page, allow viewers to contact you. Many helpful comments on my pages came from people who were not in my class. These comments were both design and content based. Always be courteous and reply back to the commentator.

Get Class Feedback

It is not enough to develop the web page. You need to make it part of the classroom activity. Feedback from the class

allows the students to take part in their learning and it gives them an incentive to look at the page. Create an in-class discussion about what the students want on the web page. Show the students the finished copy of your page in class. Also show them how to get to the page and make the page easily accessible. If students are having a difficult time finding the page, they may stop trying. Most colleges have e-mail for all of your students, so send them a bulk e-mail showing the URL (Universal Resource Locator - the address of your web page on the World Wide Web). Include your e-mail address on the page so that the students can contact you. As you get more advanced, you may want to add an anonymous comment form for students.

I put weekly notes and homework assignments on my web page for my students. Many students have commented on the usefulness of the weekly notes. Most of these notes are summary points from the previous class. I also attach a completed applied problem in economics, showing an application of theory. I don't put class notes on the page until *after* the class. Advanced class notes give students an incentive not to attend. Because the weekly notes are available, more of the students pay more attention to what I am saying in class rather than rushing to copy it down.

Consider A Discussion Forum

Another new innovation for web pages is the discussion forum. There are many forum- type programs available. A forum allows asynchronous discussion of class topics outside of class. I separate forum topics into two types: tutoring and extension. The tutoring forum can include help with homework and clarification of difficult class material. The extension forum can discuss the application of class material to the outside world. The forum allows feedback on topics with or without student's names attached.

Forum programs can be complicated and may require an experienced network administrator to set them up. Teachers who use discussion forums say it has helped them understand the difficulties and attitude of the class despite class size. (Polyson, Saltzberg,& Godwin-Jones,1996)

Link Some Stuff Up

Links to other sites that relate to your class material are particularly useful. There is a wealth of information available in the world wide web and links to this information can reinforce the importance of learning the class material to the students. Besides static information, there is also interactive information available. For example, there are writing workshops, scenario games, and video and audio clips as well as real-world data.

Final Thoughts

It was my intention to show you the usefulness of developing a web page to enhance classroom instruction. This is just a basic overview of some techniques available. As you gain more experience and familiarity with the world wide web, you will become more creative and customize your classes web page to suit your and their needs.

References

Graham, I. (1997). HTML SourceBook: A Complete Guide to HTML 3.2 & HTML Extensions (3rd. ed.). New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Hewitt W. (1997). ECN 2010 Principles of Economics [WWW document]. http://www2.pstcc.cc.tn.us/~wjhewitt

Loukides, M. (Ed.). (1997). HTML the Definitive Guide (2nd ed.). New York: O'Reilly & Format.

Polyson, S., Saltzberg, S. & Godwin-Jones, R. (1996). A Practical Guide to Teaching with the World Wide Web [WWW document]. http://www.umuc.edu/iuc/cmc96/papers/poly-p2.html

Ray, D., & Ray, E. (1997). HTML for Dummies Quick Reference (2nd ed.). Foster City, CA: IDG Books Worldwide, Inc.

Shafran, A. (1997). Creating Your Own Web Pages (2nd ed.). New York: QUE.

University of Wisconsin (1998). Netforum Home Page [WWW document]. http://biostat.wisc.edu/netforum